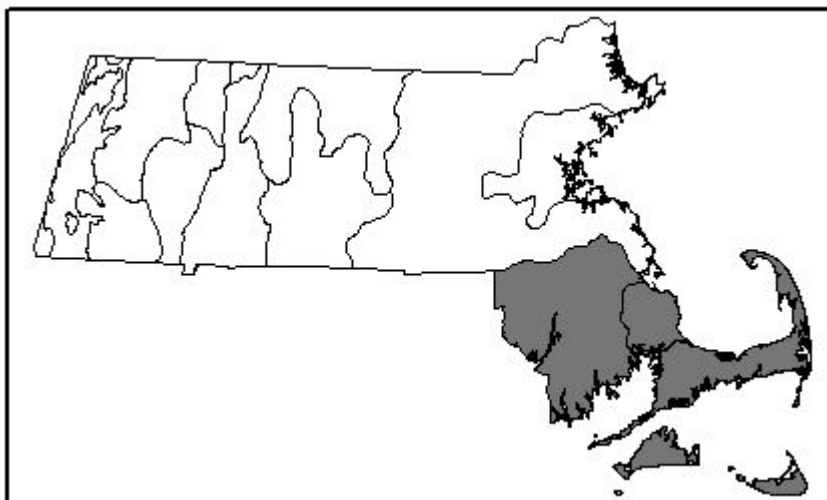


Community Name: ESTUARINE SUBTIDAL: COASTAL SALT POND
Community CODE: CE3B000000
SRANK: S2



Concept: The vegetation surrounding and in coastal saline to brackish ponds with shallow water. The inland ends tend to be fresher, with denser, taller vegetation developing.

Environmental setting: Salt ponds are found on the south and east sides of Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket, and in Buzzards Bay. The ponds are more or less isolated from the ocean by sand spits that cut off a bay. When closed, the ponds tend to be brackish and have little tidal action. The spit may become broken by storms or human intervention and close again by drifting sand. Water levels fluctuate when the ponds are closed to the ocean, with freshwater inflow from streams and rain maintaining the levels. Shorelines often support marsh areas that are similar to brackish salt marshes. Sea-level fens are very restricted areas within the marshes.

Vegetation Description: Eelgrass (*Zostera marina*) beds are often dominant communities of the subtidal areas. Other areas may not be vegetated. Towards the ocean, mud or sand shores appear during dry spells that support mud flat species such as mudwort (*Limosella australis*), dwarf spikerush (*Eleocharis parvula*), seaside flatsedge (*Cyperus filicinus*), seaside crowfoot (*Ranunculus cymbalaria*), false pimpernel (*Lindernia dubia*), waterwort (*Elatine minima*) and shore pygmy-weed (*Crassula aquatica*). The vegetation of inland ends is similar to the landward, brackish, portions of other salt marshes, with beds of narrow-leaved cattail (*Typha angustifolia*), common reed (*Phragmites australis*), freshwater cord-grass (*Spartina pectinata*), saltmarsh switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum* var. *spissum*), bulrushes (*Scirpus* spp. Particularly *S. pungens*), and mock bishop's-weed (*Ptilimnium capillaceum*).

Associations:

Habitat Values for Associated Fauna: Eel (*Anguilla rostrata*), alewife (*Alosa pseudoharengus*), and white perch (*Bairdiella chrysura*) are typical fish. Important for shell fish beds.

Associated rare plants:

CRASSULA AQUATICA	PYGMYWEED	T
HYDROCOTYLE VERTICILLATA	SALTPOND PENNYWORT	SC

Associated rare animals:

NONE KNOWN

Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

**Examples with
Public Access:**

Sesachacha Pond, Nantucket; Allen's Pond, Dartmouth; Long Pond, Tisbury.

Threats:

Artificially maintaining ponds open or closed. The increasingly invasive Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*) is becoming more abundant and displacing native species.

Management needs:

Synonyms

USNVC/TNC:

Zostera marina Permanently flooded - Tidal Herbaceous Alliance -- Zostera marina Herbaceous Vegetation [Provisional] [CEGL004336]; Includes Scirpus pungens Tidal Herbaceous Alliance - Scirpus pungens - Eleocharis parvula Herbaceous Vegetation [CEGL006398].

MA (old name):

Coastal Salt Pond.

ME:

Marine - Mud bottom community part of Marine - Salt Pond Community.

NH:

Similar to Coastal salt pond marsh.

NY:

Marine eelgrass meadow; Coastal salt pond.

CT:

Likely present, not named.

RI:

Brackish subtidal aquatic bed (eelgrass); part of Coastal salt pond.

Other:

Author:

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Date:

6/13/99